



Social Security

Special Benefits
For World War II
Veterans

www.socialsecurity.gov

Contacting Social Security

Visit our website

Our website, www.socialsecurity.gov, is a valuable resource for information about all of Social Security's programs. At our website you also can get forms to request important documents, such as a *Social Security Statement*, a replacement Social Security card or a letter to confirm your benefit amount.

For more information

If you are outside the United States, see page 3 for the list of offices where you can get more information.

If you are in the United States, in addition to using our website, you also can call toll-free at **1-800-772-1213**. We can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**.

We treat all calls confidentially. We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.

What's inside

Introduction 2

**Changes that must
be reported. 4**

How to report changes. 11

**Countries to which we
cannot send payments 12**

**If your check is lost
or stolen. 13**

Direct deposit 13

Introduction

In most cases, you are reading this booklet because you have just started getting special veterans benefits from Social Security. Public Law 106-169, enacted on December 14, 1999, provides special benefits to certain World War II veterans.

This booklet explains what changes you must report so that we can make sure you receive all the payments you are entitled to receive. The information on pages 4 through 11 tells you what changes you need to report and how to report those changes. Please read this booklet carefully and keep it in a safe place for future use.

The information in this booklet is not intended to cover all the provisions of the law relating to special veterans benefits.

How to contact us if you have questions

If you are outside the United States and have questions about Social Security, you may contact one of the offices shown below. You also may contact any U.S. Social Security office.

- If you live in the Philippines, please call the SSA Division of the Veterans Affairs Regional Office at **523-1001**, extension **2516** or **2645**, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. or write to or visit the SSA Division, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 1131 Roxas Boulevard, 0930 Manila.
- If you live in American Samoa, Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, Samoa or the Virgin Islands, contact the nearest U.S. Social Security office.
- If you live in Mexico, contact the nearest U.S. Social Security office or the nearest U.S. Embassy or consulate.

If you live in any other country, contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Changes that must be reported

An explanation of each change that you must report to us is shown below. It is your responsibility to report all changes promptly. If you fail to report a change, you may not receive a payment that you may be entitled to, or you may receive too much money and have to pay it back.

Change of address

It is important that you tell us if your address changes so that your special veterans benefits will not be lost or delayed. Also, we need your current address so we can send you important information about your special veterans benefit payments or contact you if we have a question about your benefits. You must report any changes in your home address, even if your payments are being sent to a bank.

When you report a change of address to the Social Security Administration, the Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Manila or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, please type or print **all** of the following information very carefully and clearly:

- Your name;
- Your Social Security number;

- The type of benefits you receive;
- Your new address, including your country and the ZIP or postal code; and
- Your telephone number.

Visit to or return to the United States

You must tell us if you go to the United States for a visit or to live. For special veterans benefits purposes, you are in the United States if you are in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia or the Northern Mariana Islands.

Visit to the United States

If you visit the United States and stay for more than a full calendar month, you will not be considered to be residing outside the United States for any month after the full calendar month you are in the United States. You will not be entitled to any special veterans benefit payments until you leave the United States and re-establish your residence outside the United States.

A full calendar month means every minute of every day of the month. For example: You arrive in the United States on May 25 and stay throughout the entire month of June. On July 2, you leave to return to your home outside the United States. We consider you to have

been in the United States for the full calendar month of June.

Therefore, you will not be entitled to a special veterans benefit payment for July.

There are some special circumstances under which we may consider you to be residing outside the United States, even though you have been in the United States for more than one full calendar month. For example:

- You came to the United States and made an attempt to return to your home abroad, but had to remain for more than one full calendar month because of circumstances beyond your control, such as sickness, a death in the family or a transportation strike; or
- You must remain in the United States for more than one full calendar month in order to attend a proceeding for the appeal of a Social Security Administration decision on a claim.

You may be paid your special veterans benefits for any month in which these special circumstances occur. If you believe this applies to you, contact your local Social Security office for further information.

Return to the United States to live

If you visit the United States and then later decide to live there and not to return to your home abroad, you will no longer be considered to be residing outside the United States. You will not be entitled to a special veterans benefit payment beginning with the earlier of the following:

- The month after the month in which you decide to live in the United States; or
- The month after the first full calendar month you were in the United States.

If you return to the United States to live, you will not be entitled to a special veterans benefit payment for any month after the month in which you leave your home outside the United States.

You must report to your local Social Security office your return to the United States to live or for a visit. You also must tell us if you previously reported a visit and then decided to live in the United States. Your local Social Security office also can help you if you want to apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments.

Death

It is important that your family or friends notify us immediately if you die so that incorrect payments will not be issued. If your payments were being deposited directly into an account in a bank, the bank also should be notified of your death so that it can return any payments received after your death.

Special veterans benefits are payable for the month of your death. For example, if you die any time in the month of June, the payment dated June 1 is payable. However, any payments received after your death or any uncashed benefit checks must be returned to the sender, because they are not payable to your family or estate.

Inability to manage funds

Some people who receive special veterans benefits cannot manage their own funds. If this happens to you, someone should let us know immediately. We can arrange to send your benefits to a “representative payee.” A representative payee is a relative, friend or other interested individual or institution who agrees to manage and use your benefits for your well-being. That person will be required to:

- Use the payments for your current needs;

- Save any payments not currently needed;
- Account for the use of the benefits when asked by the Social Security Administration; and
- Let us know when he or she can no longer continue to act as your representative payee or if you no longer need a representative payee.

Benefit income changes

Your special veterans benefits may be reduced if you receive other income. Other income may include Social Security retirement, survivors or disability benefits, workers' compensation benefits, veterans' compensation payments, annuities and pensions, Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) pensions and foreign pensions. It also may include any income you designate another individual to receive for you. You must report any recurring periodic payments you receive, regardless of what country issues the payments. You also must report if the amounts of these payments change.

Removal (deportation) from the United States

You must tell us if you are removed (deported) from the United States. If you are removed (deported) from the United States for certain reasons, you cannot receive special veterans benefits.

Flight from the United States to avoid prosecution or conviction for a felony

You must tell us if you left or leave a jurisdiction in the United States to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction under the laws of the United States for a crime that is:

- A felony under the laws of the state you left; or
- Punishable by death or imprisonment for a time exceeding one year in jurisdictions that do not define crimes as felonies.

You cannot receive special veterans benefits for any month in which you have left a jurisdiction in the United States to avoid this prosecution, custody or confinement.

Probation or parole violation

You must tell us if you are in violation of a condition of probation or parole imposed under federal or state law of the United States. You cannot receive special veterans benefits for any month in which you violate a condition of probation or parole.

How to report changes

You can contact us in person, by mail or by telephone in order to report the important changes that may affect your payments. Please contact one of the offices shown on page 3 if you are outside the United States. You also may contact any U.S. Social Security office.

When you contact us, be sure to include all the following information:

- Your name and Social Security number;
- The type of benefits you receive;
- The change that you are reporting;
- The date the change happened; and
- Your signature, address and phone number, if you mail your report.

Countries to which we cannot send payments

U.S. Treasury Department regulations do not allow us to send payments to you, or to a bank or an individual for you, if you are in Cuba or North Korea. You can be paid any benefits that were withheld because you were in one of these countries if:

- You are a citizen or national of the United States; and
- You are qualified for those payments; and
- You leave that country and go to one to which we can send payments.

However, **if you are not a citizen or national of the United States**, you cannot be paid those benefits that were withheld because you were in one of these countries, even when you leave that country.

Because of Social Security restrictions, we cannot send payments to you, or to a bank or an individual for you, if you are in Cambodia, Vietnam or areas (other than Armenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia) that were in the former Soviet Union. You can be paid any benefits for which you were qualified and which were withheld because you were in one of these countries if:

- You are qualified for those payments; and
- You leave that country and go to one to where we can send payments.

If your check is lost or stolen

It usually takes longer to deliver checks outside the United States because of the longer distances and extra handling time. Delivery time varies from country to country, and your check may not arrive the same day each month, so we ask you to be patient. If you do not receive your check after a reasonable waiting period, or if the check is lost or stolen, contact one of the offices shown on page 3 if you are outside the United States. You also may contact any U.S. Social Security office.

We will replace your check as soon as possible, but please be aware that it will take some time.

Direct deposit

You may wish to have your special veterans benefits deposited directly into an account at a bank or other financial institution in the country where you live or in the United States.

Direct deposit has several advantages. You never have to worry about your check being delayed in

the mail, lost or stolen. With direct deposit, you receive your payment much faster than if you are paid by check (usually one to three weeks faster than check deliveries). When direct deposit payments are sent to a financial institution, you also may avoid check cashing and currency conversion fees.

Also, some foreign banks have branches in the United States that offer direct deposit options. Even if you use the direct deposit service, you must keep us informed of any change in your current residence address. Some countries where direct deposit payments are available include:

- Anguilla
- Antigua & Barbuda
- Australia
- Austria
- Bahama Islands
- Barbados
- Belgium
- British Virgin Islands
- Canada
- Cayman Islands
- Cyprus
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Grenada
- Haiti
- Hong Kong
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica

- Malta
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- Netherlands Antilles
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Portugal
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- St. Lucia
- St. Vincent & the Grenadines
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Trinidad & Tobago
- United Kingdom

In addition, direct deposit is available in the Philippines through local banks that have correspondent banks in the United States. The Social Security Administration has no control over fees that they may charge for this service.

To determine if direct deposit (or other forms of electronic payment) is available in the country where you live—or to sign up for direct deposit—contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or consulate or U.S. Social Security Office. If you live in the Philippines, please call the SSA Division of the Veterans Affairs Regional Office at **523-1001**, extensions **2516** or **2645**, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. or write to or visit the SSA Division, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 1131 Roxas Boulevard, 0930 Manila.

Notes

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